

Richard Talbott House
301 West Second Street
Madison
Jefferson County
Indiana

HABS No. IND-130

HABS
IND,
39-MAD,
20-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. IND-130

RICHARD TALBOTT HOUSE

Location: 301 West Second Street, Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana.

USGS Madison East Quadrangle; Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 16.640600.4288440.

Present Owner: Historic Madison, Inc.

Present Occupant: Historic Madison, first floor; Mr. and Mrs. Gary Giltner, second floor.

Present Use: Storage area and apartment.

Statement of Significance: The Richard Talbott house was erected 1819-20 and is one of Madison's oldest extant dwellings. The two-story structure is raised above a fully exposed basement. Conforming to the general outlines of early nineteenth century Federal architecture the plain, five-bay facade is symmetrical about a central doorway and the roof is topped by two end chimneys. The residence was the home of some of the city's more distinguished families during the 19th and 20th centuries, and was acquired by Historic Madison in 1962.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1819-20. Richard C. Talbott acquired the title to Lot 8 in the First Addition to the Town of Madison in 1819 from John Paul, Jacob Burnett, Jonathon Lyon and Lewis Davis. Since no one proprietor had clear title to the property, it is doubtful that a structure was erected upon the land before 1819. In 1821, Talbott sold the property to the Farmer's and Mechanics Bank of Indiana; the deed referred to the sale of "lot . . . number eight together with all improvements thereon," which may indicate that the house was built between 1819 and 1821.
2. Architect: No information available.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The legal description of the property is lot #8 and part of lot #9, parcel 61 in the First Addition to the Town of Madison, Indiana. The

following deed references may be found in the Recorder's Office, Jefferson County Courthouse, Madison.

- 1819 Deed, May 5, 1819, recorded June 22, 1819 in Book B, page 340. John Paul, Jacob Burnett and Lewis Davis deeded all of Lot 8 to Richard C. Talbott for \$300. The grantors were the original proprietors of the First Addition to the Town of Madison.
- 1821 Deed, January 16, 1821, recorded in Book C, page 116. Richard C. Talbott mortgaged his property to the Farmer's and Mechanics Bank of Indiana for consideration of \$1200.
- 1826 Quit claim deed, February 22, 1826, recorded April 14, 1826, in Book K, page 309. Richard C. Talbott and his wife, Eliza Talbott, conveyed the property to the President and Directors of the Farmer's and Mechanics Bank in consideration of \$1484 to settle the outstanding mortgage of the Talbott's, dated January 16, 1821.
- 1829 Deed, May 16, 1829, recorded April 24, 1830 in Book F, page 370. Jeremiah Sullivan, president of Farmer's and Mechanics Bank, sold the property to Milton Stapp for consideration of \$910.
- 1831 Deed, October 8, 1831, recorded December 12, 1831, in Book G, page 374. Milton and Elizabeth Stapp sold the property to John Sheets.
- 1841 Deed, November 15, 1841, recorded March 26, 1842 in Book T, page 480-82. Jefferson County Sheriff, Robert Hanna, sold the title to Lot 8 and part of Lot 9 to William Lawson at auction, for consideration of \$4500.
- 1853 Quit claim deed, September 1, 1853, recorded September 21, 1853 in Book 9, page 580. William and Sarah Lawson conveyed the property to Robert P. Jones.
- 1860 Deed, August 18, 1860, recorded August 20, 1860 in Book 18, page 216. Robert P. and Elizabeth Jones sold the property to their son, William P. Jones.
- 1864 Deed, March 29, 1864, recorded April 20, 1864 in Book 22, page 552. William P. and Jane E. Jones sold the property to Parmenas T. Turnley.
- 1866 Deed, November 13, 1866, recorded January 3, 1867 in Book 28, page 48. Parmenas T. and Mary R. Turnley sold the property to Amanda M. Mahoney.

- 1867 Deed, May 18, 1867, recorded August 5, 1867 in Book 29, page 468. Amanda M. Mahoney sold the title to Rachael A. Allison.
- 1886 Deed, September 3, 1886, recorded on September 13, 1886 in Book 51, page 372. James Y. Allison and Rachael A. Allison sold the property to Nettie M. Allison, their daughter.
- 1894 Deed, May 4, 1894, recorded May 18, 1894 in Book 63, page 15. Oliver B. and Nettie M (Allison) Gordon sold the property to Rachael A. Allison.
- 1894 Deed, May 18, 1894, recorded June 6, 1894 in Book 63, page 32. James Y. and Racheal A. Allison sold the property to Nellie H. and Don A. Marr.
- 1895 Deed, October 31, 1895, recorded November 2, 1895 in Book 64, page 433. Nellie H. Marr and Don A. Marr sold the property to Charles R. Johnson.
- 1932 Deed, April 28, 1932, recorded in Book 99, page 292. Charles R. Johnson and May Johnson, as heirs at law of Charles R. and Virginia Johnson, deceased, sold out of probate the title to the property Margaret Johnson Hyatt.
- 1957 Deed, October 2, 1957, recorded October 10, 1957 in Book 126, page 280. Benjamin C. Hyatt and Virginia and Pierre McBride, as sole heirs of Margaret Johnson Hyatt, sold the property to Marie Krum.
- 1957 Quit claim deed, October 2, 1957, recorded October 10, 1957 in Book 126, page 281. Marie Krum conveyed the property to Virginia and Pierre B. Mc Bride.
- 1962 Deed, February 21, 1962, recorded February 27, 1962 in Book 132, page 305. Virginia and Pierre B. McBride sold the property to Historic Madison, Inc.
4. Original plan and construction: As originally constructed the house was L-shaped and laid out on a central hall plan with the main entrance on West Second Street. To each side of the stair hall was a parlor, the dining room was to the rear of the right parlor, and the kitchen area was housed in the ell at the rear. The second floor plan corresponded to first-floor arrangements.

5. Alterations and additions: The exterior and interior were extensively remodelled in the 1870s during Judge Allison's residency. The projecting denticulated cornice supported by scrolled brackets was added over the central doorway on Second Street, enhancing the originally plain surround. A Second Street cellar entrance and Poplar Street window were covered over, and the rough stone foundation walls were faced with finished stone. The most radical change to the structure's original fabric was the removal of the central hall and main stairway, enlarging the area of the east parlor. On the second floor, the corresponding hallway wall was also removed. A one-bay section was added on the north elevation at the inside of the ell, with the main entrance at the west end fronting on Poplar Street. The main stairway to the second floor was built in the hallway addition.

Around the turn of the century, additional alteration were completed, less severe than those completed in the 1870s. The small Second Street cellar accessway was re-opened, and covered with a metal grate, to be used as a coal chute. On the west (Poplar Street) facade a small multi-paned window was added.

B. Historic Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Richard C. Talbott: Talbott was one of Madison's early settlers who, according to tradition, arrived here in 1814, after serving in the War of 1812. He was the Recorder and Clerk of the Town between 1817 and 1821, and maintained his office in his Second Street home. By 1821, Talbott had accumulated a large number of debts, forcing him to mortgage his home at this time. He was the father of nine children. Talbott died in Madison in June 1837.

Robert P. Jones: Jones served as a Common Council Member from the Sixth Ward of Madison between May 1858 and April 1860. During this time he was also the Treasurer of the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad. By 1860, however, he was listed in the Madison Directory as a General Freight and Ticket Agent for the Railroad. In 1861, Jones was listed as the Surveyor of the Port of Madison, presumably a wharf or harbor master.

James Y. Allison: Allison was born in Madison on August 20, 1823, the son of James and Sarah Allison, an early and respected family within the town. He received his legal training at Hanover College, and returned to Madison after his graduation in 1847 to assume the position of City Attorney. His tenure in this position lasted one year, though was renewed during

1853-58. Allison lived at 301 West Second Street for twenty-one years. During this time, the residence acquired notability as the home of one of Madison's sharpest legal minds and most influential politicians. He was the Prosecuting Attorney for the southeastern Indiana Counties, and was elected State Senator from the Fourth Congressional District in 1865. From 1871 to 1873, Allison was a member of the City's Common Council; in 1873 he was elected Circuit Court Judge of the Fifth District, occupying this position until 1885. Judge Allison lived in Madison until his death in the 1890s.

Charles R. Johnson: Johnson was born on October 8, 1851, and became an active and respected Madison manufacturer during the second half of the 19th century. Shortly after the close of the Civil War, he began his career as a journeyman with the firm of Stribling and Todd, one of the city's leading iron foundries. Stribling and Todd sold the foundry to Edward Stanley in 1881, and Johnson remained with Stanley, who moved the plant to West Street. A few years later, the Stanley Works was bought out by Charles Walker and again Johnson became a partner with the new owner. He had purchased Walker's interest in the foundry by 1890, managing the business until his death in 1916. His son, C.R. Johnson, Jr., continued the family enterprise until 1946. In addition to his principal interest in the iron foundry, Johnson was an original incorporator of the Madison Telephone Company, a Supervisor and charter partner in the Madison Electric Light and Railway Company in 1892, and President of the Johnson Contract Company, which operated Madison's Water Works for many years. He also served as a Member of the City Council for twenty years, 1890-1910, and was a member of the Washington Fire Company #2, serving as Chief Director for six of this twenty-four years with the organization. His membership in fraternal societies included the Knights of Pythias, Brotherhood of Elks, the Royal Archaneum and the Odd Fellows. Charles Johnson died January 13, 1916. Charles, Jr. carried on his father's interests in the Johnson Foundry and Machine Shops and the Johnson Contract Company until his own death on July 31, 1944. The Johnson Foundry, 118-122 West Street, was destroyed by fire in February 1946.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Minutes of Fire Meetings, Washington Fire Company #2, Vols. May 19, 1908-May 1, 1922; August 5, 1922-December 17, 1946. Washington Fire Company #2 Engine House, 104 West Third Street, Madison.

2. Secondary and published sources:

American Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men of the State of Indiana. Cincinnati: Western Biographical Co., 1880, Vol. III, p. 1.

Chapman, A.S. Madison: A Jewel in Setting 'Neath the Hills. Madison: Democrat Printing Co., 1922.

City of Madison Directory, 1859-60; 1860; 1867; 1871-72; 1872-73; 1875; 1879; 1887-88; 1890-91; 1903; 1907; 1909; 1912; 1923; 1927; 1936; 1939; 1942; 1947; 1954.

Hill, Mary, comp. Early Wills and Administrators of Jefferson County, Indiana. John Paul Chapter, D.A.R., published privately, 1945.

Items from the Early Newspapers of Jefferson County, Indiana. John Paul Chapter, D.A.R., p. 381.

Madison "Daily Courier," May 27, 1861; January 13, 1916.

Madison "Daily Democrat," May 18, 1899.

Sulzer, Marcus R. "Catalogue of City Officers and Ordinances of the City of Madison, Indiana." Madison: Courier Co., 1882.

Prepared by John L. Hopkins
Team Historian
Historic American
Buildings Survey
Summer 1978

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Talbott house, erected 1819-20, is one of Madison's oldest extant dwellings. The two-story structure is raised above a fully exposed basement. Conforming to the general outlines of early 19th century Federal architecture, the plain, five-bay facade is symmetrical about a central doorway and the roof is topped by two end chimneys. As originally constructed the house is L-shaped, a plan which was common to Madison's domestic vernacular during this period.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This L-shaped structure is two stories

raised above a fully exposed basement. The front section measures 30' (five-bay front) x 40' with a wing (30' x 48') at the rear.

2. Foundation: Stone; the exposed basement walls are faced with slabs of cut stone and form a water table around the north and east sides. The facing stone is painted white.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Brick laid in common bond and painted white. A small wooden addition on the rear has clapboard siding and is painted white.
4. Structural system, framing: Load bearing brick walls with wooden framing. Log beams are on the first floor.
5. Porches, stoops: A stone stoop, raised seven steps, fronts the north entrance. The stone is laid so as to form a pilaster at each exposed corner and a projecting convex molding around the edges of the stone floor. An ornamental iron railing frames the edge of the concrete steps, extending up and around the stoop. The east entrance is fronted by a stone stoop, raised nine steps. The stone facing forms pilasters on the edges and a torus around the perimeter of the stone floor. An ornamental iron railing frames the edge of the steps, extending up to and around the stoop. Along the rear ell's east side at the main level is a wooden porch with three wooden columns which support a porch on the upper level. The second-floor porch extends around to the south side and the roof is supported by four round columns on the south and east. A wooden railing extends along the south side and for one bay along the east. On the east side, between the columns, wooden panels below wooden louvred panels, enclose the porch. There is a bulkhead on the south side of the front wing leading to the cellar.
6. Chimneys: Two large brick end chimneys sit atop the main gable ridge. The chimney at the west end is topped by a metal cap; the one on the east end has a clay chimney pot. A brick chimney rises at the center of the rear ell, capped with a metal top.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance, in the center bay of the north facade is framed with a plain wooden surround, a stone sill with a torus, and a wooden storm sash. Wooden pilasters with stone plinth bases flank the doorway. Overhead, a projecting denticulated cornice is supported by consoles. The door has a leaded glass panel on the top half and two raised panels below.

The doorway has recessed jambs and a soffitt with wooden panels on the exterior. The east entrance, leading into the stair hall, has recessed jambs and soffit, and is framed by a wooden surround, and a stone sill and lintel. The frame door has a glass panel banded by colored lights on the top half and two raised horizontal panels below. On the rear ell, a doorway on the outside west wall leads into the kitchen and a similar doorway, directly opposite on the east wall, leads from the porch into the kitchen. The doorway is framed by wooden surrounds, a stone sill and lintel. The wooden door has two vertical molded panels below a glass panel. A paneled door on the south facade leading into the utility room has wooden surrounds, wooden sill and a one-light transom.

A doorway from the dining room and stair hall leads out to the east porch. These doorways have wooden surrounds and threshold, a three-light transom and a paneled door with a glass pane on the top half. A second-floor porch door is framed by wooden surrounds and sill, and fitted with a raised paneled door.

- b. Windows: The first-floor north windows are full length with six-over-six light double-hung sash and framed by plain, wooden surrounds, stone sills, and flat brick arches. Second-floor windows have similar surrounds as those on the first floor, though they are of normal height. Louvred wooden shutters flank all openings on the north facade. Other openings on the first floor have one-over-one light double-hung sash windows and are framed by wooden surrounds, and stone sills and lintels. A slender, horizontal fixed sash on the east wall of the living room has three fixed lights banded by small colored panes and is framed by wooden surrounds, and an stone sill and lintel.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The galbe roof is covered with asphalt shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Gable ends are trimmed with wooden rake boards. A wooden box cornice has a copper gutter and downspouts.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Cellar: A small raised cellar with earthen floor extends

under the parlor; it is a storage area for the steam heating equipment.

- b. First floor: Central hall plan with the main entrance on West Second Street. The stair hall has been removed, and the front portion of the house consists of two adjoining parlors, with a kitchen ell section extending from the rear west side.
 - c. Second floor: Second-floor plan corresponds to first-floor arrangements. The rooms have been renovated as an apartment, with living and dining rooms, kitchen, bedroom and bath.
2. Stairways: The open-string stairway, trimmed with a cherry handrail and turned balusters (two per tread), extends from a newel post on the first floor to the landing, turning and extending up to the second floor. The open-string stairway to the cellar is below the main stair.
 3. Flooring: Wooden flooring on the first floor, covered with carpeting in the parlor and living room. Wooden board flooring on the second floor is covered in some rooms with rugs and linoleum.
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster walls and ceilings have been covered with wallpaper. Walls and ceiling in the utility room are wooden beaded board paneling. A vertical board wainscot is in the kitchen.
 5. Doorways and doors: The doors have double-raised panels, and are framed by plain wooden surrounds. The living room and parlor surrounds are trimmed with plinth bases and crosettes.
 6. Decorative features and trim: First-floor fireplaces are trimmed with wooden mantle pieces and cast-iron covers. The large brick kitchen fireplace was originally used for cooking.
 7. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating: Steam heating with radiators.
 - b. Lighting: Modern lighting fixtures.
- D. Site:
1. General setting and orientation: The house was erected on the southwest corner of West Second and Poplar Streets, and faces north.
 2. Outbuildings: Near the southwest corner of the garden is a reconstructed stable which is erected upon the original stone

foundation. This rectangular building is constructed with brick on the main level and horizontal board siding on the upper level. The gable roof is covered with asbestos shingles.

3. Historic landscape design: The garden is enclosed by stone retaining walls. On the north and a portion of the west side, an iron fence tops the stone wall. A brick sidewalk encompasses a well near the garden's center, possibly one of the first in Madison. Some of the rose bushes and shrubbery are original plantings.

Prepared by John P. White
Project Supervisor
Historic American
Buildings Survey
Summer 1978

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with Historic Madison, Inc. and the Indiana Historical Society. The recording project was completed during the summer of 1978 under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS; Kenneth L. Anderson, Jr., Principal Architect; and John P. White, Project Supervisor (Associate Professor, Texas Tech University); with student assistant architects Richard Berliner (Rhode Island School of Design), Jon Lourie (University of Maryland), Eric Swanson (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), and Peter Whitehead (State University of New York at Buffalo); and project historian John L. Hopkins (Skidmore College), at the HABS Field Office in Madison, Indiana. The drawings were edited in the HABS Washington Office in February 1979 by architect Rudy Massengill. The written data was edited and expanded in February 1979 by Jan E. Cigliano, a staff historian in the Washington office.

Addendum to
Richard Talbott House
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PHOTOGRAPHS
AND REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

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